

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA
Criminal No. 22-223 (NEB/DTS)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

GOVERNMENT’S TRIAL BRIEF

1. AIMEE MARIE BOCK,
3. SALIM SAID,
4. ABDULKADIR NUR SALAH, and
6. ABDI NUR SALAH,

Defendants.

The United States of America, by and through its attorneys, Andrew M. Luger, United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota, Joseph H. Thompson, Harry M. Jacobs, Matthew S. Ebert, and Daniel W. Bobier, Assistant United States Attorneys, respectfully submits the following trial brief in this matter.

I. OVERVIEW

On September 13, 2022, a grand jury returned a 61-count indictment charging 14 defendants—Aimee Bock, Abdikerm Eidleh, Salim Said, Abdulkadir Salah, Ahmed Omar-Hashim, Abdi Salah, Abdihakim Ahmed, Ahmed Artan, Abdikadir Mohamud, Abdinasir Abshir, Asad Mohamed Abshir, Hamdi Omar, Ahmed Ghedi, and Abdirahman Ahmed—with a number of crimes, including: conspiracy to commit wire fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 371 and 1343; wire fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343; conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 371 and 666; federal programs bribery, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 666;

conspiracy to commit concealment money laundering, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1956(a) and (h); and money laundering, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1957.

The indictment alleges that the defendants orchestrated and carried out a scheme that defrauded the Federal Child Nutrition Program, a government aid program designed to provide free meals to children in need. The defendants exploited the Covid-19 pandemic to obtain, misappropriate, and launder tens of millions of dollars in program funds that were intended as reimbursements for the cost of serving meals and food to children. In all, the defendants fraudulently misappropriated more than \$45 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

II. BACKGROUND

A. The Federal Child Nutrition Program

The Federal Child Nutrition Program is a government program that ensures children receive nutritious meals and snacks that adequately promote healthy physical and education development. The program is run through the Food and Nutrition Service, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”). That agency administers Federal Child Nutrition Programs, which includes the Summer Food Service Program and Child and Adult Care Food Program (together, the “Federal Child Nutrition Program”).

The Summer Food Service Program (“SFSP”) is a federal program established to ensure that children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. The Summer Food Service Program reimburses non-profit organizations and other participating entities that serve free healthy meals and snacks to children and teens in low-income areas. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (“CACFP”) is a

federal program that reimburses non-profit organizations and other participating entities that serve healthy meals and snacks to children and adults at participating childcare centers, daycare homes, and after-school programs.

The Federal Child Nutrition Program operates throughout the United States. The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service administers the programs at the national and regional levels by distributing federal funds to state governments, which provide oversight for the Federal Child Nutrition Program. In Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Education ("MDE") administers the Federal Child Nutrition Program.

The Federal Child Nutrition Program operated through sponsors, which oversaw the sites. Sponsors, like Feeding Our Future and Partners In Nutrition, are responsible for monitoring the operation of the programs and submitting reimbursement claims.

Feeding Our Future and Partners In Nutrition were non-profit organizations purportedly in the business of helping community partners participate in the Federal Child Nutrition Program. Both were approved sponsors of the Federal Child Nutrition Program, and prior to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, each operated as a small non-profit that sponsored the participation of Minnesota daycares and after school programs in the Federal Child Nutrition Program.

Meals funded by the Federal Child Nutrition Program in Minnesota are served at "sites." Each site participating in the Federal Child Nutrition Program must be sponsored by an organization authorized to participate in the Federal Child Nutrition Program. Sponsors are required to submit an application to MDE for each site.

Sponsors are responsible for monitoring each of their sites and preparing reimbursement claims for their sites.

Sponsors submit reimbursement claims to MDE on behalf of sites under their sponsorship. The USDA provides federal reimbursement funds to MDE on a per-meal basis. MDE provides the federal funds to the sponsoring agency, which in turn pays the reimbursement funds to the sites under its sponsorship. The sponsoring agency retains ten to fifteen percent of the funds as an administrative fee in exchange for sponsoring the sites, submitting reimbursement claims, and disbursing the federal funds.

In exchange for sponsoring the sites' fraudulent participation in the program, sponsors received Federal Child Nutrition Program funds as administrative fees. In 2020 and 2021, Feeding Our Future and Partners In Nutrition received tens of millions of dollars in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds in administrative fees. Because the amount of administrative fees the sponsors received was based on the amount of federal funds received by sites under its sponsorship, Feeding Our Future and Partners In Nutrition received tens of millions of dollars in administrative fees to which they were not entitled, due to its sponsorship and facilitation of fraudulent sites participating in the program.

B. The Covid-19 Waivers and Fraud

The Covid-19 pandemic, including various stay-at-home orders and distance learning, disrupted the operation of the Federal Child Nutrition Program. As a result, the USDA issued waivers to the program requirements, allowing additional flexibility

for implementing the program and expanding the scope of the program. Following the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting waivers, Feeding Our Future and Partners In Nutrition sponsored an exponential number of new sites—more than 200 new Federal Child Nutrition Program sites.

Historically, the Federal Child Nutrition Program provided meals to children involved in education-based programs or activities. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the USDA waived several of the standard requirements for participation in the Federal Child Nutrition Program. Among other things, the USDA allowed for-profit restaurants to participate in the program. It also allowed for food distribution to children outside of educational programs. At the same time, the state government's stay-at-home order and telework policies made it more difficult to oversee the program. These changes left the program vulnerable to fraud and abuse.

Beginning in approximately April 2020—with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic—Feeding Our Future and Partners In Nutrition dramatically increased the number of sites under their sponsorship as well as the amount of Federal Child Nutrition Program funds received by those sites.

Feeding Our Future went from receiving and disbursing approximately \$3.4 million in federal funds to sites under its sponsorship in 2019 to nearly \$200 million in 2021. Partners In Nutrition went from receiving and disbursing approximately \$5.6 million in federal funds to sites under its sponsorship in 2019 to more than \$200 million in 2021. In 2021, sites under the sponsorship of Partners In Nutrition claimed to have served more than 80 million meals to children in Minnesota.

III. THE DEFENDANTS' SCHEME TO DEFRAUD THE FEDERAL CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

A. The Defendants and Their Roles

Aimee Bock was the founder and executive director of Feeding Our Future, a non-profit organization in the business of helping community partners participate in the Federal Child Nutrition Program and related federal programs. Feeding Our Future was an approved sponsor of the Federal Child Nutrition Program. As a sponsor, Feeding Our Future was responsible for submitting site applications to MDE for approval, monitoring active sites, submitting claims for reimbursement from MDE, and disbursing federal funds to sites under its sponsorship. Feeding Our Future received payment from MDE and kept an administrative fee—typically 10 to 15 percent. Feeding Our Future provided the remaining funds directly to sites.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Bock and her company recruited individuals and entities to open more than 200 Federal Child Nutrition Program sites throughout the state of Minnesota. The sites fraudulently claimed to be serving meals to thousands of children a day within just days or weeks of being formed and despite having few, if any, staff and little to no experience serving this volume of meals.

Feeding Our Future also opened its own Federal Child Nutrition Program sites, including several sites in Minneapolis and a site in Burnsville. Feeding Our Future contracted with vendors who would, in theory, provide meals to be served to children by Feeding Our Future staff. In reality, the Feeding Our Future sites were fraudulent and their claims to be serving meals to thousands of children a day, seven days a week, were false.

The number of sites under Feeding Our Future's sponsorship skyrocketed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The company went from receiving and disbursing approximately \$3.4 million in federal funds to sites under its sponsorship in 2019 to nearly \$200 million in 2021. In all, Feeding Our Future fraudulently obtained and disbursed more than \$240 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In exchange for sponsoring these sites' fraudulent participation in the program, Feeding Our Future received nearly \$18 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds as administrative fees in 2021 alone. Because its administrative fees were tied to the amount of federal funds received by sites under its sponsorship, Feeding Our Future received tens of millions of dollars in administrative fees to which it was not entitled due to its sponsorship and facilitation of sites' fraudulent participation in the program.

Bock and other Feeding Our Future employees also solicited and received bribes and kickbacks from individuals and companies sponsored by Feeding Our Future. Feeding Our Future operated a pay-to-play scheme, where individuals seeking to operate fraudulent sites under the sponsorship of Feeding Our Future had to kick back a portion of their fraudulent proceeds to Feeding Our Future employees.

Salim Said and **Abdulkadir Salah** owned and operated Safari Restaurant. Along with Abdirahman Ahmed, they owned Cosmopolitan Business Solutions LLC, the entity that ran Safari Restaurant in Minneapolis. Safari Restaurant had approximately \$600,000 in annual revenue in each of the three years prior to the

onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. In April 2020, during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, Safari Restaurant enrolled in the Federal Child Nutrition Program under the sponsorship of Feeding Our Future. By July 2020, Safari Restaurant claimed to be serving meals to 5,000 children a day, seven days a week. In all, the defendants claimed to have served more than 3.9 million meals to children at the Safari Restaurant site between April 2020 and November 2021.

Safari Restaurant also operated as a vendor purporting to deliver food and meals to be served at other Federal Child Nutrition Program sites created by co-conspirators throughout the state of Minnesota. Safari Restaurant claimed to have provided more than 2.2 million meals to other Federal Child Nutrition Program sites involved in the scheme.

In all, as part of the scheme to defraud, Safari Restaurant received more than \$16 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds in 2020 and 2021. Said and Abdulkadir Salah sent much of this money to their co-conspirators via shell companies created and used to receive and launder the proceeds of the fraudulent scheme.

Both Said and Abdulkadir Salah operated other sites under the sponsorship of Feeding Our Future. Said was one of the creators of ASA Limited LLC in September 2020. Said, along with two partners, was an equal one-third owner in the company. ASA Limited opened federal child nutrition program sites in St. Paul, Minnesota. Abdulkadir Salah created a non-profit organization called Bet on Better Future in June 2021. Bet on Better Future opened several Federal Child Nutrition

Program sites throughout Minnesota, including sites in Rochester, Minneapolis, Burnsville, and Faribault.

Abdulkadir Salah was one of the owners and operators of Total Financial Solutions, a company that provided payroll and bookkeeping services to many of the companies involved in the fraud scheme.

Abdi Nur Salah and Ahmed Artan, along with another partner, obtained a non-profit entity called Stigma-Free International. They used Stigma-Free International to open several Federal Child Nutrition Program sites around the state of Minnesota, including in Willmar, Mankato, St. Cloud, Waite Park, and St. Paul. Abdi Nur Salah and Ahmed Artan also created a company called Optimum Community Services for use in opening another site through which they submitted fraudulent federal child nutrition program claims.

At the time of the scheme, Abdi Nur Salah worked as a Senior Policy Aide to the Mayor of Minneapolis. When MDE began scrutinizing Feeding Our Future and sites under its sponsorship, Abdi Nur Salah used his political influence to lobby politicians to pressure MDE not to shut down Feeding Our Future and sites under its sponsorship so that he and his co-conspirators could continue to carry out their fraudulent scheme.

Abdi Nur Salah also laundered fraud proceeds through two shell companies he created, Stone Bridge Development LLC and ANS Projects LLC, to receive and launder his share of the fraud proceeds. He used these entities to receive more than


\$1 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds, which he used to purchase real estate and to fund his own personal spending.

B. The Fraudulent Food Sites

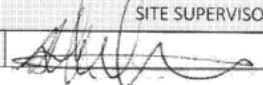
To advance the fraud, the defendants created dozens of Federal Child Nutrition Program sites throughout the State of Minnesota, which operated under the sponsorship of both Feeding Our Future. The defendants collectively claimed to be serving meals to tens of thousands of children each day throughout the State of Minnesota, for which they fraudulently claimed and received millions of dollars in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

At the outset of the pandemic, just a few sites operated as Federal Child Nutrition Program sites. The number of claims rapidly skyrocketed as the defendants and others under the sponsorship of Feeding Our Future opened more and more sites throughout 2020 and into 2021.

In April 2020, during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Safari Restaurant, a small restaurant on Lake Street in Minneapolis, opened a Federal Child Nutrition Program site under the sponsorship of Feeding Our Future. By July 2020, Safari Restaurant claimed to be serving meals to 5,000 children a day, seven days a week. Eventually, Safari Restaurant claimed to be serving 6,000 children a day.


FEEDING OUR FUTURE

SUMMER MEAL COUNTS – CLICKER

Sponsor	FEEDING OUR FUTURE		Email	aimee@feedingourfuturemn.org		Phone	612.345.4922	
Site	SAFARI RESTAURANT		Supervisor			Week of	02/01/2021	
Meal Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BREAKFAST			<input type="checkbox"/> LUNCH				
Available Meals	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
Number of meals received/prepared	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000	
Number of meals from yesterday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Meal Counts	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
Number of firsts served to children	5996	5998	5998	5995	5997	5998		
Number of second meals served to children (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of meals served to program adults (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of meals served to non-program adults (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of children requesting meals of food is gone	68	66	77	62	66	71		
Food	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
FOOD TEMPERATURE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Number of non-reimbursable, incomplete or damaged meals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of leftover meals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Initials of person taking daily meal count certifying that the information is true and accurate	SS	AS	SS	AS	AS	AS	AS	
SITE SUPERVISOR: By signing, I certify that the above information is true and accurate.								
Signature						Date	02/06/2021	

In all, the defendants claimed to have served more than 3.9 million meals to children at the Safari Restaurant site between April 2020 and November 2021.

Safari Restaurant also operated as a vendor purporting to deliver food and meals to Federal Child Nutrition Program sites created by co-conspirators throughout the state of Minnesota, including at a site known as ASA Limited in St. Paul.

Bock and Said signed a contract stating that Safari Restaurant would serve as a meal vendor providing food for the ASA Limited site in St. Paul (for which Safari would receive Federal Child Nutrition Program reimbursements from Feeding Our Future). In September 2020, just three weeks after the company was registered with

the Secretary of State, Said and other defendants claimed that the ASA Limited site served breakfast and lunch to 3,000 children a day, seven days a week. Based on these false claims, the co-conspirators received approximately \$5 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program reimbursements for meals purportedly served at the ASA Limited site.

Across all the different sites, the defendants claimed that Safari Restaurant provided more than 2.2 million meals to other Federal Child Nutrition Program sites involved in the scheme. In all, Safari Restaurant received more than \$16 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds in 2020 and 2021. Said and Abdulkadir Salah sent much of this money to their co-conspirators via shell companies created and used to receive and launder the proceeds of the fraudulent scheme.

Another defendant, Ahmed Omar-Hashim, opened a site in St. Cloud, Minnesota called Olive Management. The Olive Management site fraudulently claimed to have served meals to 3,000 children a day, seven days a week, at the Hormud Meat and Deli, a small storefront deli located in a strip mall in St. Cloud. During the 12-month period from September 2020 to September 2021, Omar-Hashim and his co-conspirators fraudulently claimed to have served more than 1.6 million meals to children at the Olive Management site. Based on these fraudulent claims, the co-conspirators received approximately \$5 million in Federal Child Nutrition Programs reimbursements for meals purportedly served to children at the Olive Management site.

The defendants' fraud, like an aggressive cancer, spread and grew. As the evidence will make clear, the number of sham food sites and phony meal claims concocted by the defendants quickly snowballed through the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic.

By October 2020, MDE became concerned about the drastic increase in meal claims by sites under the sponsorship of Feeding Our Future. In response to MDE's well-founded concerns, Bock tried to cover up the fraud by diverting attention away from Feeding Our Future and the scheme by blaming MDE when it attempted to perform legitimate oversight. MDE regularly raised questions about the number of sites and amount of meal claims being submitted by Feeding Our Future on behalf of sites under its sponsorship. Bock knew that MDE's concerns were valid, and that little of the Federal Child Nutrition Program funds disbursed by Feeding Our Future were used to feed children. Bock also knew that if MDE discovered the true nature of the fraud, the flow of federal funds to Feeding Our Future and sites under its sponsorship would stop.

Due to these concerns, MDE announced that the Federal Child Nutrition Program no longer allowed restaurants and other for-profit companies to enroll as sites. MDE explained that restaurants would only be allowed to participate as meal vendors providing food. MDE further announced that any restaurants enrolled as distribution sites would be closed as of October 31, 2020.


In response to the new policy and to allay MDE's concerns and suspicions, Bock gave false assurances that Feeding Our Future employees were monitoring the sites

under its sponsorship and that the sites were serving the meals as claimed. When MDE employees pressed Bock for further clarification and answers, she accused MDE of discrimination and unfairly scrutinizing Feeding Our Future's sites. When MDE denied Feeding Our Future site applications, Bock and Feeding Our Future filed a lawsuit accusing MDE of denying the site applications due to racial animus in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Shortly after MDE disallowed for-profit restaurants, Abdulkadir Salah and Said, along with other defendants, obtained a non-profit entity, Stigma-Free International, for use in carrying out the fraud. They immediately used their new non-profit to open a number of new Federal Child Nutrition Program sites. Other co-conspirators created additional shell companies to serve as for-profit meal vendor companies purporting to provide the meals to be served to children at these sites. Together, the defendants claimed to be serving meals to tens of thousands of children each day throughout the state of Minnesota, for which they fraudulently claimed and received millions of dollars in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

1. The Stigma-Free Willmar site.

Two co-defendants, Ahmed Artan and Abdikadir Mohamud, opened a site under the sponsorship of Feeding Our Future in October 2020 called Stigma-Free Willmar. The site operated out of a small storefront restaurant in downtown Willmar called FaaFan and claimed to serve meals to up to 3,000 children a day, seven days a week.


FEEDING OUR FUTURE

SUMMER MEAL COUNTS – CLICKER

Sponsor	FEEDING OUR FUTURE		Email	aimee@feedingourfuturemn.org		Phone	612.345.4922	
Site	STIGMA FREE WILLMAR		Supervisor			Week of	10/25/20	
Meal Type	BREAKFAST			✓			LUNCH	
Available Meals	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
Number of meals received/prepared	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	
Number of meals from yesterday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Meal Counts	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
Number of firsts served to children	2995	2996	2996	2999	2999	2997	2999	
Number of second meals served to children (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of meals served to program adults (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of meals served to non-program adults (not reimbursed)	3	0	3	1	1	1	0	
Number of children requesting meals of food is gone	41	50	53	57	62	69	60	
Food	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
FOOD TEMPERATURE	141F	141F	141F	141F	141F	140F	141F	
Number of non-reimbursable, incomplete or damaged meals	2	2	1	0	0	2	1	
Number of leftover meals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Initials of person taking daily meal count certifying that the information is true and accurate	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	
SITE SUPERVISOR: By signing, I certify that the above information is true and accurate.								
Signature	S. A. Mohamud					Date	10/31/20	

Testimony at trial will show that prior to 2020, FaaFan Restaurant served only a few dozen people a day (at most), had only \$500 or \$600 in daily sales, and less than \$200,000 in annual revenue. The owner of FaaFan Restaurant leased the storefront restaurant space for approximately \$1,600 per month. But in October 2020, one of the defendants approached the owner of FaaFan Restaurant and offered to pay him \$40,000 per month to use his small storefront restaurant for the Stigma-Free Willmar site. From January to November 2021, the defendant paid more than \$570,000 to the owner of FaaFan Restaurant.


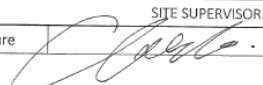
Another co-defendant, Abdikadir Mohamud, created a shell company called Tunyar Trading that purported to be a meal vendor providing meals to be served at the Stigma-Free Willmar site. Between November 2020 to November 2021, these co-

conspirators falsely claimed to have served approximately 1.6 million meals at the Stigma-Free Willmar site. The co-conspirators received more than \$4 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds based on these claims.

Rather than use this money to serve meals or feed children, the conspirators fraudulently misappropriated and stole much of it. Abdikadir Mohamed transferred more than \$2 million from Tunyar Trading to himself and other co-conspirators, including Salim Said, Abdulkadir Salah, and Abdi Salah.

2. The Stigma-Free Mankato Site

Two other defendants, brothers Abdinasir Abshir and Asad Abshir, opened another site in October 2020 called Stigma-Free Mankato. The site purported to serve meals to 3,000 children a day, seven days a week out of a small restaurant in North Mankato called J's Sambusa.


 FEEDING OUR FUTURE									
SUMMER MEAL COUNTS – CLICKER									
Sponsor	FEEDING OUR FUTURE		Email	aimee@feedingourfuturemn.org		Phone	612.345.4922		
Site	STIGMA FREE MANKATO		Supervisor			Week of	10-17-2020		
Meal Type	BREAKFAST				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LUNCH				
Available Meals	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL	
Number of meals received/prepared		2700	2800	2900	3000	3000	3000		
Number of meals from yesterday		0	0	0	0	0	0		
Meal Counts	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL	
Number of firsts served to children		2695	2793	2896	2991	2995	2994		
Number of second meals served to children (not reimbursed)		0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of meals served to program adults (not reimbursed)		0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of meals served to non-program adults (not reimbursed)		3	4	3	6	3	2		
Number of children requesting meals of food is gone		40	30	45	30	28	40		
Food	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL	
FOOD TEMPERATURE		141 F	141 F	141 F	141 F	141 F	141 F		
Number of non-reimbursable, incomplete or damaged meals		2	3	1	3	2	4		
Number of leftover meals		0	0	0	0	0	0		
Initials of person taking daily meal count certifying that the information is true and accurate		AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA		
SITE SUPERVISOR: By signing, I certify that the above information is true and accurate.									
Signature						Date	10-24-2020		
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.									

The Abshirs created a shell company called Horseed Management that purported to serve as a meal vendor providing meals to be served at the site. The Abshirs, through Horseed Management, paid more than \$440,000 to the owner of J's Sambusa from December 2020 to December 2021 in exchange for using the restaurant as the Stigma-Free Mankato site.

Between November 2020 to November 2021, the Abshirs and their co-conspirators claimed to have served more than 1.6 million meals at the Stigma-Free Mankato site. Based on these claims, they received approximately \$5 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds. Abdinasir Abshir then transferred millions of dollars from Horseed Management to himself and other co-conspirators, including Said.

3. The Stigma-Free Waite Park Site

Two other defendants, Ahmed Artan and Hamdi Omar, opened another site called Stigma-Free Waite Park. This site, which claimed to serve 2,000 children a day, seven days a week, operated out of the Green Market, a small market and grocery store located in a strip mall in Waite Park, Minnesota.


FEEDING OUR FUTURE

AFTERSCHOOL MEAL COUNTS – CLICKER

Sponsor	FEEDING OUR FUTURE	Email	aimee@feedingourfuturemn.org					Phone	612.345.4922
Site	STIGMA FREE -WAITE PARK	Supervisor	HAMDI OMAR					Week of	09/19/2021
Meal Type	SNACK					SUPPER			
Available Meals	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL	
Number of meals received/prepared	2057	2057	2057	2057	2057	2057	2057		
Number of meals from yesterday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Meal Counts	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL	
Number of firsts served to children	2057	2057	2057	2057	2057	2057	2057		
Number of second meals served to children (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of meals served to program adults (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of meals served to non-program adults (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of children requesting meals of food is gone	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Food	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL	
FOOD TEMPERATURE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of non-reimbursable, incomplete or damaged meals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of leftover meals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Initials of person taking daily meal count certifying that the information is true and accurate	HO	HO	HO	HO	HO	HO	HO		
SITE SUPERVISOR: By signing, I certify that the above information is true and accurate.									
Signature	HAMDI OMAR					Date	09/25/2021		

One of the defendants created a company called Feeding Our Youth that purported to serve as a meal vendor for the site. Between April and November 2021, these co-conspirators claimed to have served more than 500,000 meals at the Stigma-Free Waite Park site. Based on these claims, the co-conspirators received more than \$1 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program reimbursements.


4. Bet on Better Future

In late 2021, Abdulkadir Salah registered another non-profit entity, Bet on Better Future, for use in carrying out the scheme. He and his co-conspirators opened several Federal Child Nutrition Program sites through Bet on Better Future, including sites in Rochester, Minneapolis, Burnsville, Faribault, and St. Paul. Salah and his co-conspirators claimed to be serving meals to thousands of children per day

at the Bet on Better Future sites. In all, Abdulkadir Salah received more than \$1 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Bet on Better Future bank accounts in December 2021 and January 2022.

5. Southcross

In addition to acting as a sponsor, Feeding Our Future operated its own sites. One of these sites was Southcross in Burnsville, Minnesota. Feeding Our Future claimed to be served as many as 1,900 children a day at the Southcross site.

 FEEDING OUR FUTURE									
SUMMER MEAL COUNTS – CLICKER									
Sponsor	FEEDING OUR FUTURE			Email	aimee@feedingourfuturemn.org			Phone	612.345.4922
Site	South Cross Burnsville			Supervisor	Suad Muse			Week of	8-15-21
Meal Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BREAKFAST			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LUNCH					
Available Meals	Sunday 15	Monday 16	Tuesday 17	Wednesday 18	Thursday 19	Friday 20	Saturday 21	TOTAL	
Number of meals received/prepared	1927	1927	1927	1927	1918	1918	1918	13462	
Number of meals from yesterday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Meal Counts	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL	
Number of firsts served to children	1927	1927	1927	1927	1918	1918	1918	13462	
Number of second meals served to children (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of meals served to program adults (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of meals served to non-program adults (not reimbursed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of children requesting meals of food is gone	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Food	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL	
FOOD TEMPERATURE	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Number of non-reimbursable, incomplete or damaged meals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of leftover meals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Initials of person taking daily meal count certifying that the information is true and accurate	SM	SM	SM	SM	SM	SM	SM	SM	
SITE SUPERVISOR: By signing, I certify that the above information is true and accurate.									
Signature	Suad Muse						Date	8-18-21	

In August 2021, Bock sold the Southcross site to Abdulkadir Salah and Said for \$310,000. In order to make this transaction appear legitimate, Bock created a contract stating that the transaction involved the sale of a childcare center.

In December 2021, Abdulkadir Salah submitted to Feeding Our Future meal count sheets claiming that the Southcross site provided food to 1,718 children per day in November 2021. He also attached a fake roster purporting to identify the children who received meals at the Southcross site.

6. Fake Meal Counts and Rosters

The trial evidence will reveal that some of the defendants and their conspirators created and submitted sham meal count sheets and phony attendance rosters purporting to list the names of children who received meals at their sites. But these lists did not contain the names of real children. Indeed, school district personnel will testify that the vast majority of the falsified names on these rosters appear nowhere in the official school district enrollment records of multiple school districts where the defendants professed to serve millions of meals. Some of the roster spreadsheets even contained an imbedded formula that inserted a random number between 7 and 17 in the age column of the spreadsheet.

Feeding Our Future received nearly \$18 million in administrative fees for sponsoring these sites' fraudulent participation in the Federal Child Nutrition Program.

In support of their fraudulent claims, the defendants and their conspirators additionally created and submitted fraudulent invoices purporting to show their purchase of food to feed children. Repeatedly throughout the scheme, the defendants used invoices purporting to show massive payments:

However, these massive payments on the invoices purported to be for the purchase of food and meals to be served at the sites but, in reality, the defendants

used these vendor companies, and other companies to divert Federal Child Nutrition Program funds and convert them for their own use.

7. Other Sites Under Feeding Our Future's Sponsorship

In total, Feeding Our Future recruited individuals and entities to open up more than 240 Federal Child Nutrition Program sites throughout the state of Minnesota. These sites fraudulently claimed to be serving meals to thousands and thousands of children a day, often within just a few days or weeks of being formed (and despite having few staff and little to no experience serving this volume of meals). In total, Feeding Our Future fraudulently obtained and disbursed more than \$240 million in federal funds during the Covid-19 pandemic for sites purportedly serving tens of millions of meals to children.

At trial, the government intends to call witnesses who opened, operated, or worked at these various sites. These witnesses will testify, among other things, that the claims they submitted and received reimbursements for were grossly inflated and that in reality, they only served a fraction of the food they claimed to have served (if they served any food at all).

C. The Money Laundering

In all, the defendants received more than \$47 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds between April 2020 through January 2022. These federal funds were received by the defendants' companies from Feeding Our Future.

The defendants created and used an array of entities and shell companies to receive, launder, and distribute their fraudulent proceeds. Some of these companies purported to be meal vendors providing meals and food to program sites, but in

reality, the companies were shells created to disguise the source and ownership of the fraud proceeds. The defendants transferred millions of dollars between their shell companies to conceal the source of the funds, and then used the shell companies to purchase millions of dollars' worth of real estate, cars, and fund their lifestyles and personal spending.

1. The “Vendor” Companies

The defendants used “vendor” companies—ostensibly in the business of providing food for distribution—to launder their fraudulent proceeds. In reality, the vendor companies provided only a fraction of the food that their sites claimed to be serving and acted as a source to conceal the source of the fraud proceeds.

Said and two other defendants, Abdihakim Ahmed and Ahmed Ghedi, created a purported vendor company called ASA Limited LLC to carry out the fraudulent scheme. ASA Limited purported to act as a meal vendor that provided food and meals to be served at the ASA Limited site in St. Paul. In reality, Said and the other defendants used ASA Limited as a shell company to obtain and launder fraud proceeds. In all, Said and the others deposited more than \$4 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into ASA Limited bank accounts.

Another defendant, Ahmed Omar-Hashim, created a company called Olive Management Inc., which purported to be a meal vendor company that provided food and meals to be served at the Olive Management site in St. Cloud, Minnesota. In reality, he used Olive Management as a shell company to obtain and launder fraud proceeds. He deposited more than \$6 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Olive Management bank accounts.

Defendant Abdikadir Mohamud created a company called Tunyar Trading LLC to carry out the fraudulent scheme. Tunyar Trading purported to be a meal vendor company that provided food and meals to be served at the Stigma-Free Willmar site. But he actually used Tunyar Trading as a shell company to obtain and launder fraud proceeds. In all, he deposited more than \$5 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Tunyar Trading bank accounts.

Defendants Abdinasir Abshir and Asad Abshir created a company called Horseed Management LLC to carry out the fraudulent scheme. Horseed Management purported to be a food vendor company that provided food and meals to be served at the Stigma-Free Mankato site. But the Abshir brothers actually used Horseed Management as a shell company to obtain and launder fraud proceeds. In all, they deposited more than \$5 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Horseed Management bank accounts.

Following a change in the program rules that barred the use of for-profit restaurants as sites participating in the Federal Child Nutrition Program, Abdi Salah and co-defendant Ahmed Artan acquired control of an existing non-profit, Stigma-Free International. The defendants used Stigma-Free International as a purported non-profit company involved in providing free meals to children at various sites around the state of Minnesota. In reality, Abdi Salah and other defendants used Stigma-Free International as a shell company to obtain and launder fraud proceeds. In all, the defendants deposited more than \$10 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Stigma-Free International bank accounts.

As the financial records will establish, Stigma-Free and its various related entities, in turn, paid the bulk of these funds over to the vendor companies, purportedly to pay for food distribution at its various sites. Instead, the defendants used the vendor companies to receive and launder the Federal Child Nutrition Program funds while concealing the money as payments for the purchase of food.

Defendant Abdihakim Ahmed created 1130 Holdings LLC to carry out the fraudulent scheme. 1130 Holdings LLC purported to be a food vendor company that provided food and meals to be served at a Federal Child Nutrition Program site in St. Paul. In reality, he used 1130 Holdings as a shell company designed to obtain and launder fraud proceeds. In all, he deposited more than \$1 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into 1130 Holdings bank accounts.

Defendant Hamdi Omar created a company called Feeding Our Youth LLC, ostensibly to run the Stigma-Free Waite Park site. Feeding Our Youth purported to be a food vendor company that provided food and meals to be served at the Stigma-Free Waite Park site. In reality, she used Feeding Our Youth as a shell company designed to obtain and launder fraud proceeds. In all, she deposited more than \$1 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Feeding Our Youth bank accounts.

2. The Shell Companies

The defendants also created and used an array of other companies to conceal and launder their fraud proceeds.

Salim Limited LLC

Said created Salim Limited LLC in July 2020. He used Salim Limited LLC as a shell company to hide and disguise the source and ownership of his portion of the fraud proceeds. From August 2020 to January 2022, Said deposited more than \$6 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Salim Limited LLC bank accounts. Among other things, he used this money to purchase real estate and cars.

3017 LLC

Abdulkadir Salah used 3017 LLC as a shell company to hide and disguise the source and ownership of his portion of the fraud proceeds. Between November 2020 and January 2022, Salah deposited more than \$4 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into 3017 LLC bank accounts. Among other things, he used this money to purchase real estate and cars.

Afrikan Village LLC

In May 2021, Said, Abdulkadir Salah, and Abdirahman Ahmed registered Afrikan Village LLC with the Ohio Secretary of State. They each transferred more than \$800,000 in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds to an Afrikan Village bank account in June and July 2021. They then spent \$2.4 million of this money to purchase a commercial building in Columbus, Ohio that formerly housed the Columbus Culinary Institute.

Afra Grill LLC

Defendant Abdirahman Ahmed also used another company, Afra Grill LLC, to receive and launder his share of the fraud proceeds. Between September 2020 and

May 2021, he deposited more than \$2 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Afra Grill accounts. He then transferred the bulk of this money into his personal bank accounts. Among other things, he used this money to purchase a home in Delaware, Ohio, and a Lexus RX350 sport utility vehicle.

AG Limited LLC

In December 2020, defendant Ahmed Ghedi created AG Limited LLC. Ghedi used AG Limited as a shell company to hide and disguise the source and ownership of his portion of the fraud proceeds. Between December 2020 and November 2021, he deposited more than \$2 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into AG Limited LLC bank accounts. He used this money to purchase more than \$245,000 in cars, to fund more than \$200,000 in credit card spending, and to purchase real estate.

Calikamin Enterprises LLC

In January 2021, defendant Abdinasir Abshir created Calikamin Enterprise LLC. He used Calikamin Enterprise LLC as a shell company to hide and disguise the source and ownership of his portion of the fraud proceeds. In 2021, he deposited more than \$1.8 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Calikamin Enterprise bank accounts. He used the money to pay personal expenses and fund international travel.

Santana LLC

In January 2021, defendant Asad Abshir registered Santana LLC with the Minnesota Secretary of State. He used Santana LLC as a shell company to hide and disguise the source and ownership his cut of the fraud proceeds. In 2021, he deposited

more than \$750,000 in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds into Santana LLC bank accounts. He used this money to, among other things, pay for personal spending, international travel, and to purchase a GMC Sierra 1500 pickup truck for approximately \$78,000.

Omar Management Corporation

In September 2020, defendant Hamdi Omar registered Omar Management Corporation, which she used as a shell company to receive and launder her cut of the fraud proceeds.

Stone Bridge Development LLC and ANS Projects LLC

Abdi Salah created two shell companies to receive and launder his share of the fraud proceeds. In January 2021, he created Stone Bridge Development LLC, which he used as a shell company to receive and launder his share of the fraud proceeds. He used Stone Bridge Development LLC to receive more than \$1 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds, which he used to purchase real estate and to fund his own personal spending.

Abdi Salah then sent much of the fraud proceeds to other entities he created in order to purchase real estate. One such entity was ANS Projects LLC, which Abdi Salah created in August 2021. Salah used ANS Projects LLC to purchase a multi-family home in Minneapolis along with another individual involved in the scheme, Sharmarke Issa.

Five A's Projects LLC

In October 2021, Abdi Salah and four other defendants created a shell company, Five A's Projects LLC, in which they were all equal partners. Together, the transferred more than \$1 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds to Five A's Projects LLC, which they used to purchase the former location of Kelly's 19th Hole, a bar and restaurant in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota.

Handy Helper's [sic] LLC

Bock siphoned money out of Feeding Our Future through an entity created and owned by her live-in boyfriend, Empress Watson, called Handy Helper's [sic] LLC. Watson created Handy Helper's in November 2019. He opened a bank account for his new entity in March 2020. Over the next 18 months, Bock transferred nearly \$900,000 from Feeding Our Future to her boyfriend's company. This represented more than 96 percent of the total deposits into the account. Beginning in May 2020, Bock paid \$7,000 per week to Handy Helper's. She increased that amount to \$10,000 per week in October 2020. These payments were ostensibly for maintenance and construction work at Feeding Our Future's office in St. Anthony, Minnesota. But, in reality, Watson did little work at Feeding Our Future and he was already on the Feeding Our Future payroll. The payments to Handy Helper's were a way for Bock to receive and launder the proceeds of the fraud scheme.

Bank records will show that Bock and Watson used the money Bock paid from Feeding Our Future to Handy Helper's to fund their personal lifestyle, including more than \$50,000 in personal travel Bock and Watson took to Las

Vegas and elsewhere, \$20,000 to rent exotic cars on a trip to Las Vegas, and tens of thousands of dollars in luxury retail and jewelry spending.

3. The Spending of the Fraud Proceeds

The defendants spent their fraudulent proceeds freely. They spent millions of dollars purchasing real estate, including commercial and residential property in Minnesota and a former culinary institute in Ohio. The government expects to introduce evidence of these property purchases, including title company records and financial records showing the source of the fraudulent proceeds used to make these purchases.

Defendants also used fraudulent proceeds to purchase cars, largely in cash with no financing. The government expects to introduce evidence of these purchases, including car dealership records, car title records, and financial records showing the source of the funds used to make these purchases.

The defendants also used fraud proceeds for personal spending and fund their lifestyles. They also used the proceeds of their scheme to invest in other businesses that had nothing to do with feeding Minnesota children. For example, several defendants, including Abdulkadir Salah and Abdi Salah, invested approximately \$1 million to purchase a bar and restaurant in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota.

In short, defendants used the Federal Child Nutrition Program funds they received as a slush fund to enrich themselves, rather than to feed children.

D. The Kickback Scheme

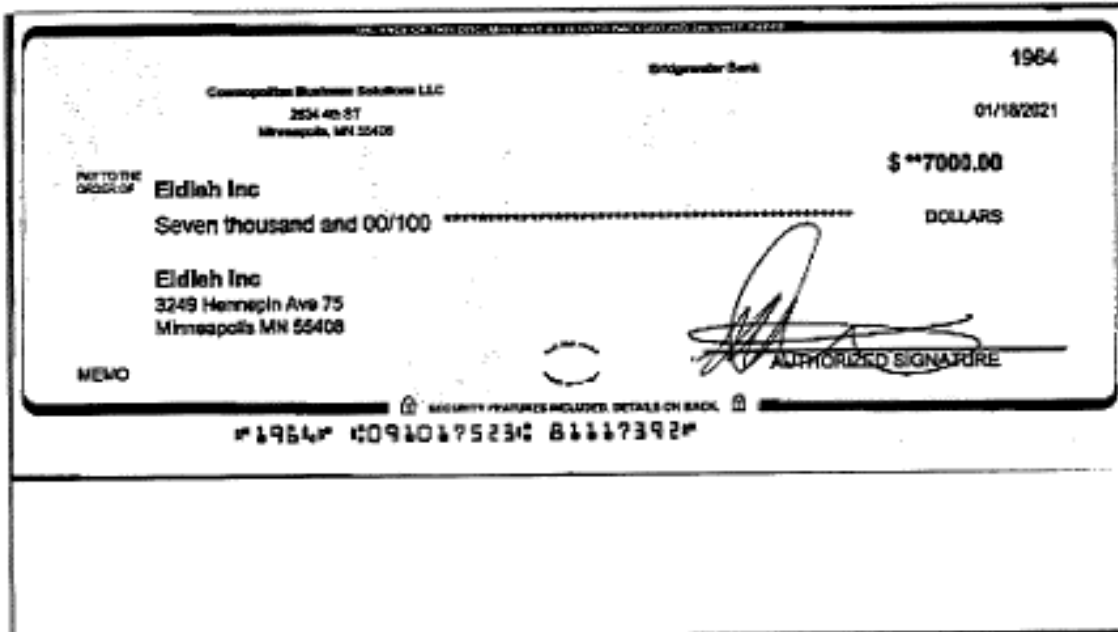
To carry out this massive fraud, the defendants participated in a conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery.

Said and Abdulkadir Salah, along with other defendants, paid bribes and kickbacks to Bock and other employees of Feeding Our Future in exchange for the sponsorship of their fraudulent participation in the Federal Child Nutrition Program.

At trial, the evidence will show that Feeding Our Future operated a “pay-to-play” scheme in which individuals seeking to operate fraudulent sites under its sponsorship had to kick back a portion of their fraudulent proceeds to Feeding Our Future employees, including Aimee Bock. Many of these kickbacks were paid in cash or disguised as “consulting fees” paid to shell companies created by Feeding Our Future employees to conceal the true nature of the payments and to make them appear legitimate.

At least one witness, a former Feeding Our Future employee, will explain how the pay-to-play scheme worked, including the formation of shell companies and disguised kickback payments. This witness will testify about the substantial kickback and bribe payments accepted by Feeding Our Future employees. He will also testify that defendant Abdikerm Eidleh, a Feeding Our Future employee, created and used a number of shell companies to receive and conceal the bribe and kickback payments he received from individuals involved in the fraud scheme, including Hope Suppliers LLC, Bridge Logistics LLC, Bridge Consulting and Logistics LLC, and Eidleh Inc. In all, Eidleh deposited more than \$5 million in kickbacks, bribes, and other fraud

proceeds into bank accounts opened in the name of these companies, including dozens of kickbacks from the defendants in this case.



Bock also accepted a \$310,000 payment from Abdulkadir Salah and Said in exchange for transferring Feeding Our Future's Southcross site to them. They created a contract stating that the transaction involved the sale of a childcare center owned by Bock in order to make the transaction appear legitimate. In reality, the daycare center had little to no assets and no operations, and the payment was really a kickback for the transfer of the Southcross site.

IV. POTENTIAL LEGAL AND EVIDENTIARY ISSUES

A. Summary Testimony and Charts

The United States intends to call law enforcement agents to testify as summary witnesses in its case-in-chief. "The testimony of a summary witness may be received so long as she bases her summary on evidence received in the case and is

available for cross-examination.” *United States v. Ellefsen*, 655 F.3d 769, 780 (8th Cir. 2011) (quoting *United States v. King*, 616 F.2d 1034, 1041 (8th Cir. 1980)).

In addition, because this case involves voluminous documentary evidence, including bank records and other financial documents, the government intends to offer summary charts into evidence in order to assist the jury. Summary charts are properly admitted when (1) the charts fairly summarize voluminous trial evidence, (2) they assist the jury in understanding testimony already introduced, and (3) the witness who prepared the charts is subject to cross-examination with all documents used to prepare the summary. *United States v. Spires*, 628 F.3d 1049, 1052-53 (8th Cir. 2011) (citing Fed. R. Evid. 1006). “Also, summaries may include assumptions and conclusions so long as they are ‘based upon evidence in the record.’” *Id.* at 1053.

B. Stipulations and Self-Authentication Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 902

The parties have discussed foundational stipulations with respect to certain business records that will obviate the need to call custodians of records as witnesses at trial. While the parties are still working through the details of these stipulations, the government is hopeful that the parties will be able to put this stipulation on the record at the pretrial conference.

With respect to any business records for which the defendants are unwilling to stipulate with respect to foundation, the government has and will be providing notice to defense counsel of its intent to offer these business records pursuant to the self-authentication provisions of Federal Rules of Evidence 803(6) and 902(11). The records have and will be identified with particularity to the defense in the

government's Federal Rule of Evidence 902 notices, and they have all previously been provided to the defense in the government's Rule 16 disclosures. Certifications for these records have also been made available for the defendant's review. The government will also seek to admit certain public records pursuant to the self-authentication provisions of Federal Rules of Evidence 803(8) and 902(1), (2), and (4).

Dated: January 10, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,

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